



SUCCESS STORY

City of Eugene, Oregon

Digital Public Engagement Closes the Circle of Communications and Expands Reach

OVERVIEW

For the City of Eugene, online public engagement was the missing piece that perfectly complemented their community outreach strategy.

The City of Eugene was surprised at the reach of their name-the-street contest held on their digital engagement platform: they received 1,092 ideas from the community.

The community continues to demonstrate great interest in public projects; 7,818 people in Eugene are registered on the platform.

SOLUTION

EngagementHQ

METRICS

1,092

entries received in the platforms name-the-street contest

7,818


people in Eugene are registered on the platform

The Need for More Tools in the Public Engagement Toolbox

When traditional strategies need a boost to reach more people

Prior to implementing EngagementHQ, the City of Eugene, Oregon focused on a multi-faceted communications strategy that was traditional in nature. They utilized in-person open houses, surveys, and post cards as part of their outreach.

The city desired a space where residents could learn about current projects and share feedback at their own pace, on their own time, ensuring more voices were heard, not just a vocal minority. A centralized location for projects was key; everything from a serious transportation planning project to a fun neighborhood contest.

 *(Online public engagement) is another opportunity and another avenue that is in coordination with the other practices that we know are tried and true. It allows us to broaden our specific outreach tactics and engagement strategies to be more robust and get additional voices in the room to help us flesh out projects."*

– Brian Richardson, Public Affairs Manager, Public Works, City of Eugene

Taking Surveys, Comments, and Interactive Maps to the Next Level for Robust Data

Cross-tabulation ability makes for valuable and ready-to-use data

The impetus for the City of Eugene to launch their EngagementHQ site, Engage Eugene, was a complex project that contained three smaller projects within it. They immediately made use of the Places mapping tool to help them better understand where pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers were having issues, and the areas that could be improved. Residents dropped pins and left comments on the map that helped to reveal how the transportation system was working in the city. This was helpful for discussions around improvements, as well as working through different stakeholder conversations.

The detailed survey tools in EngagementHQ allow city staff to collect vital demographic information vs. the responses, and mix and match to cross tabulate. Registration and demographic information from users help to ensure the City knows who it's reaching and who it needs to spend more time working to reach, including people of color and underrepresented groups. The analytics aide in understanding what is being said, and that information is passed along to decision makers.

A Diverse Audience That Feels Heard Leads to a Higher Level of Trust in Local Government

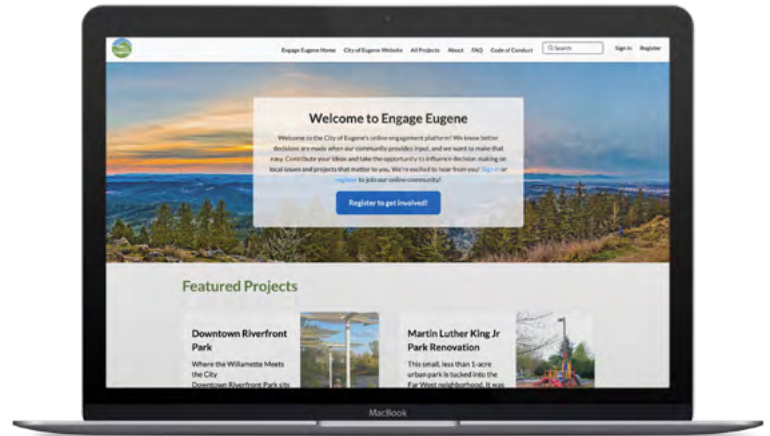
Growing ideas, relationships, and trust

When the city of Eugene was developing part of their riverfront and needed to build entirely new streets and infrastructure, they turned to Engage Eugene for their first fun, online community engagement project. The area was a critical piece of land connecting downtown to the riverfront. This project was an opportunity for residents to share what they thought was important for the city, and what was missing when it came to historical connections.

The city asked for ideas for new street names and was amazed when they received 1,092 submissions. They felt a strong commitment from residents to the connection of history in the area. The street names that were chosen honored historic Black leaders and Native American communities in the area.

Success has also been uncovered around projects that historically did not receive much public interest. The city's census and ward boundary project is a topic that residents didn't always engage with in the past. By leveraging their digital platform, Eugene staff was able to better demonstrate how the boundaries inside of the wards can change while providing the opportunity for residents to weigh in. The EngagementHQ interface makes challenging topics, like housing code changes, easier to understand for residents, leading to higher quality community feedback

To read the full story, visit cutt.ly/eugene-or-success



Want to learn more about gathering community feedback?

Get in touch at granicus.com or info@granicus.com